

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
MAY 15, 1997**

PROJECTS REVIEWED

Convened: 10:00 AM

Ballpark Pedestrian Plan  
TT Minor

DISCUSSION

Design Review Evaluation

SUBCOMMITTEES

SODO Center / Starbucks Banner Project  
Tolt Treatment Facilities Design Build Operate Project  
Seattle Center Oversight Committee

Adjourned: 1:45 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Barbara Swift, Chair  
Moe Batra  
Carolyn Darwish  
Gail Dubrow  
Robert Foley  
Gerald Hansmire  
Jon Layzer  
Rick Sundberg

STAFF PRESENT

Marcia Wagoner  
Vanessa Murdock  
Michael Read

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051597.1      Project: **BALLPARK PEDESTRIAN PLAN**  
Phase: Draft Plan  
Presenters: Steve Pearce, Office of Management & Planning  
Chuck Kirshner, Public Facilities District  
Dennis Forsyth, NBBJ  
Lesley Bain, Weinstein Copeland  
Time: 1.5 hour (0.3%)

As part of the ballpark street vacation process, the Public Facilities District was asked to prepare a pedestrian connections plan for the vicinity of the ballpark and to contribute \$1.2 million towards off site pedestrian improvements. The scope of the plan includes pedestrian connections to the ballpark, to parking areas, and to transit nodes. No boundaries for the area to be considered were specified. Implementation of the pedestrian connections plan would well exceed the contribution of the PFD, however potential additional sources of funding thus far identified include future projects in the area, grants, local improvement districts and other city funds. The draft pedestrian connection plan will be presented to adjacent communities and the historic review boards for review and comment. The plan will then be revised, based on public comment.

The goal of the plan is to identify improvements to the current pedestrian network that will result in safe, pleasant routes to and from the ballpark that reinforce and strengthen the character of adjacent neighborhoods. The plan incorporates input from area stakeholders and reflects a wide range of improvements, from modest additions to the existing sidewalk to the development of a pedestrian infrastructure. A recommended pedestrian connection plan was generated, broken down into those routes that currently have an acceptable level of pedestrian amenities and those areas where improvements would be desirable. The areas where pedestrian improvements would be desirable have been further broken down into areas currently slated for development projects that would undertake a level of pedestrian improvements and those areas where no development has been specified. The following street segments have been identified in the draft plan for improvements: Occidental between Jackson and King; Occidental between King and Royal Brougham; Occidental between Massachusetts and Holgate; Railroad Avenue west of Occidental; First Avenue south of Railroad Way; Royal Brougham west of First; Massachusetts between First and Occidental; Fourth Avenue from Airport Way to Royal Brougham; Third Avenue from Atlantic to Holgate; Holgate from First to Fourth; Occidental at King; First at Railroad; Second at Jackson/Union Square; Fifth at Jackson; Jackson and I-5 Gateway.

The following criteria have been proposed to evaluate where to best allocate the funds available from the PFD: proximity to the ballpark, likely use as a pedestrian path to the ballpark, strengthening neighborhood identity, enhancing pedestrian safety, cost/benefit, neighborhood support, impact on adjacent businesses, ability to minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular circulation and, relationship to status and timing of other planned projects.

## **Discussion**

- Layzer:** You have identified 15 street segments for improvements; each project could cost upwards of hundreds of thousand of dollars.
- Forsyth:** Our charge was to develop a comprehensive pedestrian plan for the area, rather than to decide how the \$1.2 million from the PFD should be spent. The rationale being that before the \$1.2 million is allocated, a plan should be in place.
- Dubrow:** Somewhere between the plan and the individual projects, we need a list of criteria to help evaluate the various improvement projects.
- Kirchner:** There is a list of criteria in the draft plan on page 25. We intentionally did not prioritize the criteria, as they may change after the public comment period. In June we will revise the current criteria.
- Dubrow:** It seems the criteria listed assume a level of functionality. Some see the improvements as mitigation.
- Pearce:** The street vacation language is pretty clear - our work must relate to the pedestrian connections.
- Dubrow:** I think the criteria could be better framed as functional and mitigation improvements that address daily pedestrian life. Currently, the criteria are heavily weighted toward ballpark function over daily neighborhood life.
- Foley:** I think the draft plan nicely organizes the improvements. What were your driving principles regarding these improvements? What aspects enhance the pedestrian environment? Is the goal to convey the largest number of people most effectively?
- Forsyth:** A sense of safety when walking enhances the pedestrian environment, as does avoiding conflicts of modes; softening the environment with vegetation; widening the sidewalk.
- Bain:** Each neighborhood has different ideas of what an enhanced pedestrian environment constitutes. For instance the North Duwamish neighborhood is very concerned about safety, while the Pioneer Square neighborhood would really like to see some place making occur.
- Hansmire:** I would suggest investing the \$1.2 million from the PFD in completing a system rather than spreading the money out thinly among many smaller fix-it projects. No one really understands how expensive these projects are. You need a focal point for the first allocation of funds to garner support for the larger plan.
- Darwish:** I would recommend expanding your area further east. A lot of people park up around and 6<sup>th</sup> and Washington, where there aren't even any sidewalks.
- Dubrow:** I think the pedestrian connections project should be conceptually framed such that there is a balance between improvements contributing to a level of uniformity and those contributing to the diversity.
- Swift:** Under the concept of public good in exchange for the vacation of a public street, what definition was tied to the public good to be gained?
- Pearce:** I don't think the specificity you are looking for is here, the street vacation calls for providing safe and attractive access to the ballpark.
- Forsyth:** In developing each segment, we looked at what needed to be done to make the area pedestrian friendly. We were not tied to a dollar figure. The ballpark is working

extensively on the area immediately surrounding the facility, however the ballpark is not the only area.

**Dubrow:** I think the plan is admirable, ambitious and potentially vulnerable. While it might be your inclination to concentrate on the larger improvement projects, I would urge you to strike a balance between the larger projects and the smaller quirky projects that contribute to neighborhood character.

**Swift:** In identifying anticipated development projects, did you determine which ones were most likely and which ones were highly speculative? What are you going to do about any gaps in the system that might arise due to a development project that falls through?

**Forsyth:** The ballpark and parking garage are definitely going to be completed. The SR519 project has begun design, but has no allocated funding. The Kingdome is an unknown at this time. King Street station will take care of itself.

**Pearce:** A grant has been awarded for \$6 million to be spent in and around King Street station.

**Foley:** You might want to extend your study area to include the connection to the busway on the east side of the tracks.

**Darwsih:** Are any moneys being contributed by Pioneer Square businesses?

**Pearce:** No, they would have to volunteer to do that. However, with the renewed activity in Pioneer Square, it is possible that could occur down the road.

**Hansmire:** My understanding was that improvements to public area right of ways are not taxable.

**Pearce:** We will look into that.

The widening of Occidental Street will continue to be debated. The issue is up in the air because of the football stadium.

**Foley:** Because of the uncertainty surrounding the Kingdome, this project will not get funded?

**Pearce:** To really do it right, additional funding is required.

**Hansmire:** Occidental street is a classic example of not doing something right in the first place.

**Foley:** How will these improvements function when there is not an event? The Kingdome section could take all of your budget. My personal opinion is to put money towards the smaller projects that are benefited on non-event, as well as event, days.

**Kirchner:** When a game gets out, there is no sidewalk wide enough to accommodate that volume. We will still close Occidental on game days.

**Swift:** I am glad to hear that.

**Dubrow:** Your vocabulary of street improvements includes sidewalk widening and upgrades, trees and utilities. I am disappointed that public rest rooms are not included. Where does that discussion stand? A lot of the impacts on the smaller businesses will be people asking to use their private rest rooms.

**Kirchner:** The issue has not yet been raised.

**Dubrow:** Perhaps it could open the door for a city wide discussion.

Commissioners and staff discussed the Executive Summary of the Commission's recommendations. A briefing before City Council's Parks and Public Grounds is scheduled for June.

**ACTION:** The Seattle Design Commission strongly supports and recommends the further development of the current Holly Park redevelopment proposal as presented, particularly as it reflects an extensive process of community involvement that is unlikely to develop in alternatives that might be generated by others in the next two months. If undermined by last minute alternative proposals, the public process undertaken thus far will prove to be disingenuous and there will be a profound loss of faith by the public in the neighborhood planning process. A delay in the project would not only negate the extensive public process undertaken thus far, but would result in a loss of Federal Housing and Urban Development funds, essential to the realization of this project. In addition, the Commission offers the following comments:

- The present solution addresses the situation by providing quality and adequacy in the housing stock. The approach and method represent a progressive agenda in terms of linking housing and social services in a manner that not only improves the daily life of residents, but also provides the support that may make it possible for people to move out, to move from renting to owning, or to make more significant financial contributions towards their rent. This process sets a dignified and humane standard. The high quality of the project warrants the potential difficulty to be encountered as a result of a loss of unit quantity.
- The issues of internal site circulation and hierarchy of landscape scale have been resolved. The next step is to knit those components back into the neighborhood including taking some of the landscape elements into surrounding neighborhoods to create strong transitions.
- The architecture is extraordinarily well conceived and thoughtful. With a few more refinements, it will offer the internal flexibility sought through the underlying goals of the project.
- The idea of leaving traces of culture throughout the site, not necessarily in the physical architecture, but as part of the site, is conceptually strong and supported.
- Alley units linked to the rental units as well as peripheral development along the site for economic development are encouraged, and will hopefully help balance the function of the garage in the for-sale units versus the parking pads for the rental units.
- Careful and thoughtful programming of the community center is essential to developing meaningful support for the residents and a sense of community. The Commission requests to see the further development of the site plans and the organization of the internal functions for the community buildings when that level of information is complete.
- The development of design guidelines addressing the transitional spaces between different age and culture user groups in the two community facilities is strongly encouraged.
- The planning process has been very thoughtful in developing a new vision, and has broken down the historically accepted rules and methods for the design of public housing which have not been successful. The Commission strongly endorses destigmatizing public housing and applauds the effort of weaving this community back into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Finally, the Commission recognizes the project as a potential model for a more holistic approach to future development, if a mixed income community becomes the model for the redevelopment of low income housing. The Commission strongly urges City Council and the Seattle Housing Authority to continue to monitor the cumulative impacts of the reduction of units both on the public housing community and the larger community of Seattle.

Foley will read the revised action into the public record on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Public Hearing.

- C. STARWOOD HOTEL SIDEWALK TREATMENT The Commission reviewed a request for the installation of 1' x 1' pre-cast concrete and granite pavers in the sidewalk in front of three entries to the Starwood hotel, at the corner of Seneca Street and Fourth Avenue. The pattern would extend from the hotel entries to the sidewalk curb. After review of the plans and discussion, the Commission concluded that the installation of such a pattern across the full width of the sidewalk was excessive and recommended that the pattern not extend beyond 4 feet from the property line.
- D. WEST GALER STREET RAMPS CONSULTANT SELECTION REQUEST Layzer will serve with Hansmire as alternate.
- E. PIKE STREET IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT OPEN HOUSE Scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup> from 3 - 6 PM. at the Meeting Place at the Market.
- F. WEST LAKE UNION CORRIDOR BRIEFING Commissioners and members of the Planning Committee briefed Councilmember McGiver on the West Lake Union Corridor Public Process on May 13<sup>th</sup> and are scheduled to brief the City Council's Transportation Committee on May 20<sup>th</sup>.
- G. SEATTLE CENTER REDEVELOPMENT PUBLIC WORKSHOP SERIES Hansmire will attend the May 20<sup>th</sup> and July 10<sup>th</sup> workshops, Dubrow will attend the June 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop.

051597.4            Project: **TT MINOR**  
                          Phase: Pre-Design  
                          Presenters: Beth Purcell, Department of Parks & Recreation  
                          Randy Allworth, Allworth Design Group  
                          Time: 0.75 hour (0.3%)

TT Minor is an elementary school located on the corner of 18<sup>th</sup> and Union. After money was allocated for improvements to the play area and equipment on site, the site was considered appropriate for a master plan effort to determine the best location for the play area. Two site plans have been generated. The first site plan respects the existing street grid and buildings off that grid for an organization of functions. The second site plan organizes the play area and other elements in a more organic fashion.

### **Discussion**

**Dubrow:** What is your budget?

**Purcell:** Our overall budget is \$700,000, \$290,000 of which is for the play area and ADA improvements.

- Layzer:** Both schemes call for a relocation of the Metro bus stop. Why not relocate the school bus stop instead?
- Allworth:** We would like to keep the school bus stop as close to the school as possible.
- Dubrow:** Are there ways to extend the play area into the staff parking areas off hours?
- Allworth:** Our thought was that the basketball courts would draw users who would use the staff parking lot off-hours.
- Dubrow:** Have you considered a different paving pattern on the parking area?
- Layzer:** I am not thrilled about continuing to accommodate overflow parking.
- Purcell:** People do park there on a daily basis. I agree that nothing should be sacrificed for the sake of overflow parking, however. I will have to check with DCLU regarding the parking requirements.
- Foley:** Have you considered bringing some green between the school and the gym?
- Allworth:** When we met with the community early on, their desire was to maintain the court spaces hardscape as they are so intensively used.
- Dubrow:** The design has a centrifugal pattern - the outlying areas get more treatment than those at the center. Have you tried the reverse, that is concentrating your improvements at the center of the site rather than the periphery?
- Darwish:** I would be inclined to bring the small children's play area closer in to the school for supervision purposes.
- Allworth:** The community felt that the play area belonged to the school.
- Darwish:** Why not locate the parking at Pike and 16<sup>th</sup>?
- Allworth:** We looked at that. The school did not like being so close to the street.
- Layzer:** The first scheme is preferable regarding the orientation of the ballfield. The proximity of the tot lot and the basketball courts in scheme 2 is problematic. I also worry about the sight lines in the second scheme.
- Allworth:** We have heard that before - we will be using high branched trees.
- Darwish:** I like the idea of separating the younger kids play equipment from that of the older kids.
- Allworth:** The key is to provide both separation and connection at the same time.
- Darwish:** I like the basketball courts in the northeast corner.
- Layzer:** Setting the courts in a circle is a good use of space.
- ACTION:** **The Commission commends the design team for considering a wide range of options and applauds the community outreach effort.**

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051597.5      Project: **SODO CENTER / STARBUCKS BANNER PROJECT**  
Subcommittee: Swift, Darwish  
Phase: Street-Use Request  
Presenters: Micahel Kreis, NBBJ  
Time: 0.5 hour (hourly)



The SODO Center Starbucks Banner proposal consists of a series of 9 artistic banners (6' wide by 14' tall) mounted on 40' masts at 14' above sidewalk grade for a 200' segment of Utah Avenue S. The primary intent of the project is to create a pedestrian friendly environment along the massive building facade that fronts the large parking lot between Utah and First Avenue S. Uplighting and tapered fins will enhance the banner graphics, which are derived from the marketing and packaging designs developed by Starbucks Coffee Company.

The subcommittee endorses the SODO Center Starbucks Banner proposal as an appropriate means of enhancing the pedestrian environment along this segment of Utah Avenue S. The subcommittee recommends approval of the requested street use permit contingent upon clarification of the nature of the graphic to be utilized on the proposed banners.

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051597.6            Project: **TOLT TREATMENT FACILITIES DESIGN-BUILD-OPERATE PROJECT**  
                          Subcommittee: Foley, Sundberg  
                          Phase: Consultant Selection  
                          Time: 2 hours

Commissioners Foley and Sundberg attended a proposal presentation with Seattle Public Utilities staff regarding the Tolt Treatment Facilities Design-Build-Operate Project.

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051597.7                            **SEATTLE CENTER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
                          Serving: Dubrow, Hansmire  
                          Time: 3 hours

Concepts from the Mercer Street Theater District Charrette were presented to the Seattle Center Oversight Committee.